IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1 and 2, without prejudice or disclaimer, and substitute therefor new claims 11 and 12.

This set of claims is a clean set of pending claims 3-10, with new claims 11 and 12 appearing afterward, consolidating any previous versions of pending claims into this single clean version, with changes made in this response being shown in the Appendix.

3.   (Amended) A data transmitting element (DTE) to be used for sending data, over a link through a first communications network, towards a data receiving element (DRE) for communication of said data over a second communications network, said DTE comprising:

data sending means (DSM), adapted to send said data towards said DRE;

service level requesting means for generating an Internet Protocol Control Protocol (IPCP) message, for sending to said DRE, requesting a service level for communicating said data of said DTE over said second communications network; and

service level proposal receiving means:

adapted to receive from said DRE an IPCP message indicating a proposed service level that said DRE can provide for communicating said data of said DTE over said second communications network, and

notifying said DSM of said service level proposal.

4.   (Amended) The DTE according to claim 3, further comprising service level proposal renegotiating means, coupled between an output terminal of said service level proposal receiving means and an input terminal of said service level requesting means, for generating another IPCP message requesting a service level, different from the proposed service level indicated in said

IPCP message from said DRE, in response to an indication that said proposed service level is not a satisfying service level.

5.   (Amended) A data receiving element (DRE), to be used for receiving data from a data transmitting element (DTE), over a link through a first communications network, and communicating said data over a second communications network, said DRE comprising:

data receiving means (DRM), adapted to receive said data from said DTE;

service level request reception means for receiving an Internet Protocol Control Protocol (IPCP) message, from said DTE, indicating a requested service level for said communicating of said data of said DTE over said second communications network;

service level negotiating and proposing means, coupled with said service level request reception means, for determining a service level that said DRE can provide for communicating said data of said DTE with said second communications network, based on at least one predetermined criterion and on said requested service level, and formulating, as a service level proposal, an IPCP message indicating said determined service level; and

service level proposal sending means, coupled with said service level negotiating and proposing means, for sending said IPCP message as said service level proposal.

6.   (Amended) A data receiving element (DRE), to be used for receiving data from a data transmitting element (DTE), over a link through a first communications network, and communicating said data over a second communications network, said DRE comprising:

data receiving means (DRM), adapted to receive said data from said DTE;

service level negotiating and proposing means, for determining a service level that said DRE can provide for communicating said data of said DTE with said second communications network, based on at least one predetermined criterion and on said requested service level, and formulating, as a service level proposal, an IPCP message indicating said determined service level; and

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service level proposal sending means, coupled with said service level negotiating and proposing means, for sending said IPCP message as said service level proposal.

7.   (Amended) A software module for running on a processing system for inclusion in a data transmitting element (DTE), for sending data, over a link through a first communications network, towards a data receiving element (DRE) for communication of said data over a second communications network, said software module comprising:

a data sending sub-module, adapted to send said data towards said DRE;

a service level requesting sub-module, for generating an Internet Protocol Control Protocol (IPCP) message, for sending to said DRE, requesting a service level for communicating said data of said DTE over said second communications network; and

a service level proposal receiving sub-module:

adapted to receive from said DRE an IPCP message indicating a proposed service level that said DRE can provide for communicating said data of said DTE over said second communications network, and

notifying said data sending sub-module of said service level proposal.

8.   The software module according to claim 7, further comprising a service level proposal renegotiating sub-module, co-operating with said service level proposal receiving sub-module and said service level requesting sub-module, for generating another IPCP message requesting a service level, different from the proposed service level indicated in said IPCP message from said DRE, in response to an indication that said proposed service level is not a satisfying service level.

9.   (Amended) A software module for running on a processing system for inclusion in a data receiving element (DRE), for receiving data from a data transmitting element (DTE), over a link

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through a first communications network, and communicating said data over a second communications network, said software module comprising:

a data receiving sub-module, adapted to receive said data from said DTE;

a service level request reception sub-module, for receiving an Internet Protocol Control Protocol (IPCP) message, from said DTE, indicating a requested service level for said communicating of said data of said DTE over said second communications network;

a service level negotiating and proposing sub-module, co-operating with said service level request reception sub-module, for determining a service level that said DRE can provide for communicating said data of said DTE with said second communications network, based on at least one predetermined criterion and on said requested service level, and formulating, as a service level proposal, an IPCP message indicating said determined service level; and

a service level proposal sending sub-module, co-operating with said service level negotiating and proposing sub-module, for sending said IPCP message as said service level proposal.

10.   (Amended) A software module for running on a processing system for inclusion in a data receiving element (DRE), for receiving data from a data transmitting element (DTE), over a link through a first communications network, and communicating said data over a second communications network, said software module comprising:

a data receiving sub-module, adapted to receive said data from said DTE;

a service level negotiating and proposing sub-module, for determining a service level that said DRE can provide for communicating said data of said DTE with said second communications network, based on at least one predetermined criterion and on said requested service level, and formulating, as a service level proposal, an IPCP message indicating said determined service level; and

a service level proposal sending sub-module, co-operating with said service level negotiating and proposing sub-module, for sending said IPCP message as said service level proposal.

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Please add the following new claims:

11.   (New) A method for data communication, comprising:

setting a level of service for a data transmitting network element (DTE), said DTE being connected to a data receiving network element (DRE) via a point-to-point connection of a first communications network, said DRE being connected to a second communications network, said level of service relating to transporting data between said DTE and said second communications network via said DRE, wherein said level of service is set by:

determining, at said DRE, a service level that said DRE can provide for communicating said data of said DTE with said second communications network, based on at least one predetermined criterion;

formulating, at said DRE, an Internet Protocol Control Protocol proposal indicating said determined service level;

sending said Internet Protocol Control Protocol proposal to said DTE; and

receiving said Internet Protocol Control Protocol proposal at said DTE; and then

transporting said data between said DTE and said second communications network via said DRE according to said level of service indicated in said Internet Protocol Control Protocol proposal.

12.   (New) The method for data communication as set forth in claim 11, further comprising:

before said determining of said service level at said DRE:

sending, from said DTE to said DRE, an Internet Protocol Control Protocol request indicating a requested level of service; and

receiving at said DRE said Internet Protocol Control Protocol service level request sent from said DTE;

wherein said determining of said service level at said DRE is based also on said requested level of service of said DTE.